
CFS Promotions Unit

A Volunteer organisation of the South Australian Country Fire Service and the South Australian Country Fire Service Volunteers Association

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CFS Promotions Unit Report 2024

The CFS Promotions Unit celebrated its 30th year of operation, and continues with its original charter of:

- Promote the volunteer nature, role and size of the CFS
- Support the members of the CFS
- Educate the public on
 - The operational activities of CFS members
(Road Crash Rescue / Rural Fires / Structure Fires / Hazardous Materials Spills/ Natural Disasters)
 - The support roles of CFS HQ and volunteers
(eg: Bushfire Prevention & Public Safety Education)
- Encourage new recruits to join the service
- Demonstrate the commitment of CFS volunteers to serving their community
- Gain public support for the CFS volunteers and organisation

Thirty years of the Promotions Unit

This year, we celebrated 30 years of the Promotions Unit with an event at CFS HQ. Guests included the CFS Chief Brett Loughlin, previous CFS Chief Greg Nettleton, Nick Warwick – who came up with the concept, gained funding & support and worked to build the original Pantech and Promotions Unit, foundation members and other supporters.

We have seen a lot of change in 30 years – several CFS Chiefs, a number of CFS VA Executive officers, a mobile display unit, a website, social media, film cameras, digital cameras, drone cameras, changes in funding, introduction of ESAU, SAEFCOM, changes in WHS & presumptive cancer legislation and so much more – but the one constant we do have is CFS Volunteers – who continue to support us, so we can support them.

Website and Social Media

The Promotions Unit website continues to hold the most up to date information about CFS appliances and brigades around the state, with continued feedback received from staff and volunteers, that the site is used not just as a reference point for information about appliances, stations, brigade contacts and details, but often the place to get the most accurate information regarding appliances and stations!

While the information is relatively up to date, we are always seeking input from brigades and groups to ensure it is correct as it can be. Thanks goes to those brigades and individuals who have provided photos and updates – no matter how small that update might be. It all goes towards keeping the site current.

As in previous years, several CFS, MFS, SES and NPWSSA staff have been very helpful in providing photos and information to update the site - thanks to all those who have assisted.

The number of Facebook page followers continues to increase each year, with just under 13,000 followers on our main page - around 500 more than this time last year. The number 'X' (formerly Twitter) followers has remained steady since last year, with around 127 followers. This number has remained around that static for several years.

Our Instagram page, launched around 2 years, has grown from 196 this time last year to 301 followers currently. We are seeing a slow increase over time and expect that to continue.

We continue to supply images that appear on our site (many taken by us, some taken by people who submit their image to us) – to various organisations, including CFS HQ, newspapers, researchers / universities and more. We have a massive photo collection, with only a portion of it on display on the Promotions Unit Galleries - but still in the thousands. With the ease of access for members of the public / organisations to those photos leads to requests. Given we have a budget that covers our costs, images are supplied free of charge.

Our Promotions Unit History Facebook Page now has almost 2900 followers on the page (an increase of around 150 over last year). The History page, as the name suggests posts photos and information that is not current CFS activities / stations / appliances, which is opposite to our other Facebook page, which deals with the current.

With such a large collection of photos going back 30+ years, we have started displaying more of our historical collection on our history facebook page and website history section – ‘On this day’ - featuring photos from our collection. We had had lots of positive engagement from our audience.

Promotions Unit vehicle

Our Promotions Car 1 – a Pajero, delivered to us in February 2020 is working well for us. It provides us the ability to get out & about to a range of activities. Being marked up, it also allows us (appropriate) access through road blocks etc.

The running costs / fuel / service / tyres for this vehicle are funded from the Promotions Unit budget – and so far has proven not to be beyond our budget – although it is very heavy on tyres, which does eat into our budget – with this year the whole budget being spent.

History Project

We continue to collect and catalogue historical information and photographs, and where possible, put on display. Alas, changes in our work circumstances have meant a bit less time than previously to work on history. However, wherever we can, we collect the information, so it is not lost – and can be displayed later.

We continue to seek information and photographs from CFS members (past & present) as well as members of the public, who may be able to assist in adding to our collections.

Budget

The Promotions Unit continues to receive a budget from CFS, through the CFSVA. While this budget has not increased for some time, the budget has adequately covered our expenses, - however with rising costs, we after now at the point where we spend the whole budget, and perhaps a little bit more.

We expect our expenses over the coming year to include the following:

Recurrent expenditure:

- Internet access
- Website hosting
- Domain registration
- Fuel
- Insurance
- Vehicle service repairs / tyres
- Trailer Registration
- Stationery & consumables (eg camera memory cards, USB sticks, batteries, postage, bulk digital storage)
- Accommodation (when travelling for events)

We purchased a new camera and lens this year, and one last year, to replace our previous cameras and lenses which were starting to become unreliable, due to age. We have also recently purchased a drone, to enable

photos to be taken from a different perspective. We have undertaken the appropriate training and certification for the size of the drone we have.

Conclusion

The website continues to be an ever growing, and ever changing beast. As in previous years, there is rarely a day that goes by without at least something being updated on the website – some days only small updates, other days significant or large scale changes.

Time to work on the site, attend incidents & activities to take photos, as well as our own paid work, looking after our two Junior members, and our own brigade responsibilities makes for a very busy time!. At times, it means that there is a delay in being able to sort, and upload photos we have taken, to the site, especially in a busy year, however, they eventually get there.

Thanks to all those who have contributed to the CFS Promotions Unit website – from those who regularly supply photos and information, and those who update their brigade information once a year, and to those who look at the site – without all of you, the site would not exist.

A special thanks to Braeden Gatt, Steve Schueler and Bob Whitbread (Adelaide Emergency Media) for the many photos supplied to us.

Special thanks to the staff from Infrastructure & Logistics – Dean Norman, Andrew Hogg, and Andrew Horwood, and Regional Staff – Emily Mace, Josh Jeffree, Chrissy Sherry, Brendan Piller and Damien Van der Velde for appliance information and photographs.

Thank you to the CFS VA for your ongoing support. For the Promotions Unit to still exist after 30 years, to continue to evolve and succeed is a testament to the support we receive.

Thank you.

Pip McGowan & Ashley Hosking
Website Administrators
CFS Promotions Unit
October 2024